

Edina Art Center Board Meeting
August 27, 2009
4:30pm at EAC

Edina Art Center Mission Statement

The Edina Art Center mission is to provide facilities, programs and services that meet and reflect the needs of our residents and neighbors for participation, education and enjoyment in the Arts with emphasis on fine arts.

Members present: Hafed Bouassida, Rick Fesler, Bev Fischer-Soshea, Bill McCabe, Heather Randall King, Ken Rosland, Sharanya Srinivasan, John Swon, Renee Usem, and Michael Whitt

Members absent: Megan Norman

Staff present: Diana Hedges and Phil Johnson

CALL TO ORDER: Heather Randall King, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

APPROVAL OF MAY MINUTES

The minutes for the July 23, 2009 meeting were read and approved.

EDINA PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE-Rick Fesler

Rick began by giving the Edina Public Art Committee (EPAC) responses to the questions raised at the last Board meeting concerning term limits for EPAC members. He stated the first question as: "What is the EPAC response to the EAC board recommendation that they follow term limits compliance on the two-term limit now in place for all but one City board?" EPAC members discussed this at their last meeting and became involved in some semantic issues as well as the issue as to when EPAC was actually begun. The official date that EPAC was conceived was in the year 2004. It was never formalized until 2006. What is suggested that they do keep the two-term limit of three-years each, effective 2006 for which this year is the end of the first term and in the year 2012 they would establish a definite two-term limit. Diana Hedges stated that she had talked with City Clerk Deb Mangen. According to Deb, EPAC is considered a sub-group of the Art Center Board and that EPAC does not have to go by the rules required of the Board. A sub-group is not a Board or commission as defined by the City. The attendance requirements are not the same as those of a Board. In terms of such issues as term limits, the Board might want to refer to Code 180 for definitions. Heather King added that her understanding of the question from the EAC Board was that it was a suggestion that EPAC consider adopting a policy regarding term limits and that their board might be interested in serving on EPAC. Heather asked how many people serve on EAPC. Rick replied that they have a minimum of seven and a maximum of ten. Heather asked how many might like to retire. Rick replied that he thought three might want to retire. Bev Fischer-Soshea asked if there any dual-membership between EPAC and EAC Board. Rick replied that he was the only one with dual membership in his role as liaison. He added that EPAC had discussed another title - emeritus - for Betty Hemstad or others who cannot be at meetings for a while for various good reasons. Diana reminded that EPAC members don't have attendance requirements. Rick responded that he would communicate that to EPAC. Michael Whitt suggested that the EAC Board could set such a requirement. Ken added that EPAC does report to the EAC Board and that a

requirement could be enacted but he isn't convinced that this is necessary since EPAC is looking at finding new members to replace those who want to retire. He is aware that EPAC has taken several matters directly to the City Council without involving or informing this Board. The Board should approve these matters before the Council is asked to approve. There are wonderful people on EPAC and they have done wonderful work but the subject of moving people through boards and commissions is a concern of the Council and perhaps EPAC should take action in this area as well. Renee Usem suggested that the Board develop a mission statement for EPAC. Diana responded that EPAC has a mission statement. Hafed Bouassida stated that he is still unclear as to what EPAC does. Rick responded that EPAC sponsors such things as the installation and dedication of art on the Promenade that Hafed had attended in July. Heather added that arrangements had been made to have EPAC minutes sent to Board members so they can be kept up to date. Michael added that Hafed's question was apropos to some language in a definition he has drafted. "EPAC is a standing committee appointed by and subordinate to the Edina Art Center Board established to enhance the beauty of Edina's public spaces with two and three-dimensional art. Linda Kieffer's role with EPAC is an outgrowth of her work while she was on the EAC board.

Rick's next question was: "What is EPAC's response to the Board's suggestion that it contact apartments and condominiums regarding participation in the water bill contributions to public art?" Rick said that following last month's Board meeting he was all set to go down to the Water Utilities department to see how this is done and get their assistance to broaden the scope of the program. At the EPAC meeting, Dick Crockett brought his attention to a requirement that monies generated from the water bill check-off program must first go to payment of an initial debt incurred to obtain artwork for the new City hall. That seems to nullify any near term funding of other art projects. Phil Johnson asked how this affects the question as to whether apartments and condos can be tapped for check-off donations. Rick responded that it would be to no avail to EPAC or the Art Center to contact them. Diana commented that it would be worthwhile in order to build the fund more quickly. Ken expressed his opinion that an appeal to apartment owners and condo associations would fall on deaf ears. Heather restated the question: "Are they going to apartments and condos as well as to private homes?" Ken assured that water bills are going to all water users in Edina and any appeal printed on those bills will potentially be read by all. Heather asked if anyone has followed up to verify if any of the condos or apartments is contributing through the check-off. Rick stated that just prior to the dedication of the Pinecone sculpture at Centennial Lakes and then the Promenade, several residents of the Centennial Lakes neighborhood contacted home owners and condo owners and they did get some interest in donating. The only instructions they could give was to call the number listed to setup a donation on their water bills. They say there were some responses but it's hard to measure. Bev asked: "Why is it hard to measure?" Ken responded that the only way to measure would be to go to the Utility department to get the addresses of the condos and apartments and look at their water bill records. He doubts that you would find takers. Condo associations have boards that make decisions for their members and apartments have corporate owners who would be a hard sell to add this expense in light of the present economy. Heather summarized that the extent of participation in the water bill contribution program by apartments and condos is not known but probably is not a viable source. The issue is in EPAC's hands to do what they wish with it.

Point three to EPAC was: :EPAC's willingness to assign a person or persons to direct expansion of outreach exhibits to include hospitals and additional area businesses with high-level foot traffic and general visibility? As you know, this program is part of public art

and is a logical fit for EPAC” Rick brought EPAC’s response that with several other projects underway, what they need is more members in order to carry out this mission. If they can find a way to do it, they would like to do it. Diana commented that she had asked this question before and had received the same answer. She understands that everyone is busy. Heather asked if the committee is actively doing anything to attract new members in order to increase the size of the committee. Rick responded that they could use two or three additional members right now. Bev asked if the size of the committee is based on population or how is the size determined? Ken responded that it was probably based on the Council’s opinion as to what makes a workable group size as well as originally finding folks who had a burning desire to work on public art for the community. They have done a wonderful job to this point. They could expand their membership; the key is to find people who are willing to work. Heather asked if the committee is doing any recruiting or now that this subject has been brought up, a recruiting effort might begin. Rick responded that EPAC had thought, in error it turns out, that its membership size was limited to ten people. Now that this is not the case, it would seem that now is the time to get organized to expand and to be ready to replace people who retire. Bev commented that losing 30% or more of your board weakens the board. Ken commented that one of the downsides of term limits is that you are forced to lose some pretty good board members. While you might get some very good replacements, you might not.

Rick commended board members attention to the EPAC website. Anne Spooner’s minutes should be posted soon. Today’s EPAC meeting was kind of a barn-burner with discussion of budgets and requests to the City Council for operating funds for next year to finance the installation of some more sculpture pieces. Ken commented that could be a tough sell because employees are being asked to take involuntary time off through leave of absence next year. It’s a tough year for the State.

Heather summarized that the Board had raised some questions with EPAC that needed to be raised and now they should be given time to talk about these issues.

CONNECTING WITH THE SCHOOLS - Renee Usem

Renee reported another opportunity had been presented in early August. She and Diana had discussed the history between the Art Center and the Community Center. EAC has not presented many classes for children there. It just seems that there should be synergy there for EAC to get more involved in outreach to children. There is a company called Abra Caboodle that does an outstanding job. She will explore with that firm any opportunities for involvement by EAC. She will have more to report at the next meeting.

GREER GARDEN - Bill McCabe and Renee Usem

Their sub-committee met twice since last meeting. There were no meetings with City staff. Bill and Renee did review the results from the questionnaire, mostly responses from the staff with a few from the public. Generally, the responses showed a preference for a display garden that could be used for sitting/ gathering on an optional basis but it was not essential that the space be a functional public space. Their recommendation to the City would be for a walkway outside the door that ran around the corner thus furnishing a ramp way for access for people in wheelchairs or those using strollers to the space. The door should be replaced, landscaping be installed and some type of screening element and a retaining wall to level the space. No large deck is recommended. They envision being able to set up some chairs

when desired but that no permanent seating be installed. Heather asked if there were anything new about a budget. Bill replied that there was nothing new. Michael asked if the next steps were to have an architect draw up some plans and come back with cost estimates. Bill agreed that those would be the next steps. Michael asked if a time estimate were available. Bill thought it might still be possible to get started this fall.

FILM FESTIVAL - John Swon

John reported some good news that progress had been made in contacting the Landmark Cinema in Edina. Rick Fesler had talked by phone with Gillian Constantine, manager of the theater. They are celebrating their 75th Anniversary and are quite busy with several events. Rick has an appointment with her on Monday. The committee continues to look at alternative sites such as the Edina High School and the AMC Theatres at Southdale but the preferred venue is the Landmark Cinema. John had a wonderful meeting with Rachel Hubbard of the 50th and France Business Association. They are extremely excited about the concept. He was surprised to learn that the association had explored doing a film festival in the past but had lacked someone to spearhead the effort. They are quite on-board and, and once discussions with the Landmark Cinema ensue, the association will participate. Bill commented that he had seen an ad for a movie to be shown at Centennial Lakes Park and wondered what they show. Ken responded that a free movie is shown at the Amphitheatre each Thursday evening during the summer.

FALL INTO THE ARTS - Ken Rosland

Ken reported that the roster of artists was close to 240 for the Fall into the Arts Festival scheduled for September 12 and 13, 2009. Advertising has been placed and should appear starting in about a week. Everything is in place. We need people and good weather. Heather asked Diana to explain the Art Center's participation at the Festival. She reported that the Art Center will have a tent right in front of the Centrum building; a great location with much better foot traffic than the former location inside the Centrum. Several staff members and instructors will be doing recycled art. The activity is for the family, all ages. We will use silver foil that had been donated by a battery company. It will be used to make crowns for boys and girls and dogs, if you want. We will use plastic bottle caps and add glitter for a little fun. We will have a donation container also. Heather asked what volunteers would do if they were not artistic types.

Diana replied that they could talk to people, hand out class schedules and answer questions about the Art Center. Heather reiterated that the Art Center would not be involved in running the tavern. Ken confirmed that he had arranged for several paid and licensed people to staff the Tavern on the Lake for wine and beer sales and no additional volunteers were needed. He did, however, invite Board members to stop in to buy a glass of wine to benefit the Edina Crime fund.

WEBSITE UPDATES - Michael Whitt

In response to concerns raised during previous Board meetings, Michael examined the Edina Art Center website and created a proposal for revised language for several of the pages on the site. His proposal document is Attachment A. The pages addressed initially are the Home Page, Administration, Art Center Board and Exhibits. From a site architecture standpoint, the website is very extensive; there are dozens of pages. His initial intent was

not to deal with issues other than the clarity and conciseness of information on these four pages. He worked with the assistance of a communication department intern. Diana complimented Michael on the enhancements and said perhaps it took a Board member's perspective to get this done.

Further updates will be coming. John asked if statistics are kept on website visits. Diana responded that Communications Director, Jennifer Bennerotte, keeps website statistics and issues a monthly report to Edina staff. Michael drew attention to the underlined words and phrases that are "hot links" which connect to other web pages. Bill mentioned that there are a couple of different ways to get into the Art Center site and depending on which pages are accessed there are a couple of different lists showing the same material; one list is current and the other out-of-date. Hafed mentioned that site maintenance is very important and asked how the site is updated. Diana replied that currently staff reviews pages and makes a screen capture and prints the pages so handwritten updates and corrections can be made. Those pages are then given to the Communications Department or if the changes are minor ones, an email is sent to them. Art Center staff would prefer to make edits directly to the web pages using the Microsoft FrontPage 2003 software that the communications department uses but that approach has not been approved. Hafed suggested that this request be made again since it would be much easier and more efficient to make edits directly as needed rather than submitting hand-drawn corrections in batches. John asked how the website could be used to publicize the Film Festival. Diana responded that a link might be established to connect to Film Festival web pages. While we generally cannot create links to other organizations or businesses, a link to our own sponsored event might be approved. The ensuing discussion resulted in Michael agreeing to use his proposed edits and enhancements as a vehicle to assess how the updating process could be improved and bring a progress report back to the next meeting.

JURIED SHOW-Michael Whitt

Michael reported good strides in the past month. His progress report is attached. Key dates are September 9th for submissions and September 21st for Bring-in day. Publicity so far is an article in About Town, a mention in the Art Center Exhibits web page, and some printed materials to be distributed at the Fall Into The Arts Festival. Also, a mailer is being prepared to previous entrants urging them to participate. Press releases will go out prior to the opening date. A decision was made to start naming the awards to carry over from year to year to recognize long-time and large-sum contributors. As an example, the "Ron and Sandy Clark Family Award of Excellence sponsored by" might be sponsored by the Clarks this year but sponsored by others in future years. Reception and catering arrangements are complete. A draft of the event program is underway. Conversations continue with the judges to ensure they are comfortable with timing and expectations for the September 24th judging activities as well as their role at the Opening. There is good budget news. Donations to date are \$6,100 compared to last year's total of \$5,000. Michael is working with Edie Fesler to get volunteer sign-ups to shifts for the Opening.

BOARD ATTENDANCE/ PARTICIPATION - Ken Rosland

Ken brought a proposal to mitigate the problem caused by the Board meeting only eight times per year. The Guidelines for the Edina Art Center Board stipulate: "Any of the following shall cause the office of a member to become vacated: a) Failure to serve, as shown by failure to attend three consecutive regular meetings, or four meetings in a twelve

(12) month period (Ordinance 162) unless excused by the Board Chair.” When the attendance minimum of 75 percent is applied to only eight meetings, that means a Board member missing more than two meetings will have their position vacated. Ken’s proposal is to increase the number of meetings by scheduling meetings to coincide with key Art Center exhibitions, openings or other events. As an example, a short regular meeting would be scheduled for the hour prior to the Juried Show Opening. This would count as a regular meeting and would increase the base number to which the percentage is applied. Hafed asked why meetings are not scheduled for December through March. Diana replied that this is done in recognition that a quorum is not available during those months because members were in warmer climes, although committee meetings continued during those months. Hafed suggested that at least two more regular meetings be scheduled plus adding two event-linked meetings to restore the total of twelve meetings. Heather cautioned that a meeting held just before major events may be difficult because committee people and volunteers are scurrying about handling last minute challenges. Michael proposed that members come to the next meeting with their preferences for regular and event-linked meetings at which time a Board decision can be made.

Ken also made a proposal that Board members look at the annual calendar of events in order to commit to attendance at exhibits and openings. Their role at those events would be to meet and greet and represent the Art Center.

Director’s Report - Diana Hedges

The Director’s Report is attached as Attachment C. Diana reported that sign-up sheets for the Fall Into The Arts festival are at the Front Desk. She also encouraged Board members to take a stack of Fall Schedules to leave wherever they can find a take-one location. She showed a draft of a publicity handout for the upcoming Nature of Tile exhibit. This exhibit is a cooperative effort with the National Handmade Tile Association. The display of tile art work is almost complete in the Gallery. It will be a wonderful show and will bring a lot of local and national notice to the Art Center. Board members can also participate at the Closing ceremonies from 4 to 6 pm on Sunday, September 20th.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

COMMUNITY COMMENT

During "Community Comments," the Chair will ask to hear from those in attendance who would like to speak about something not on the agenda. Individuals must limit their presentations to three minutes and cannot speak to an issue for which a public hearing was previously held and closed or a matter scheduled for a future hearing. Individuals should not expect the Board to respond to their comments. Instead, the Board might direct the matter to staff for consideration at a future meeting.

The City of Edina wants all residents to be comfortable being part of the public process. If you need assistance in the way of hearing amplification, an interpreter, large-print documents or something else, please call 952-927-8861 72 hours in advance of the meeting.

No members of the community were present.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 pm.

Next Board Meeting will be September 24th at 4:30pm.